Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Ceredigion
Public Services Board

Caru·Love
Ceredigion

CEREDIGION LOCAL WELL-BEING PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

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SECTION 1- Background

1.1 Foreword

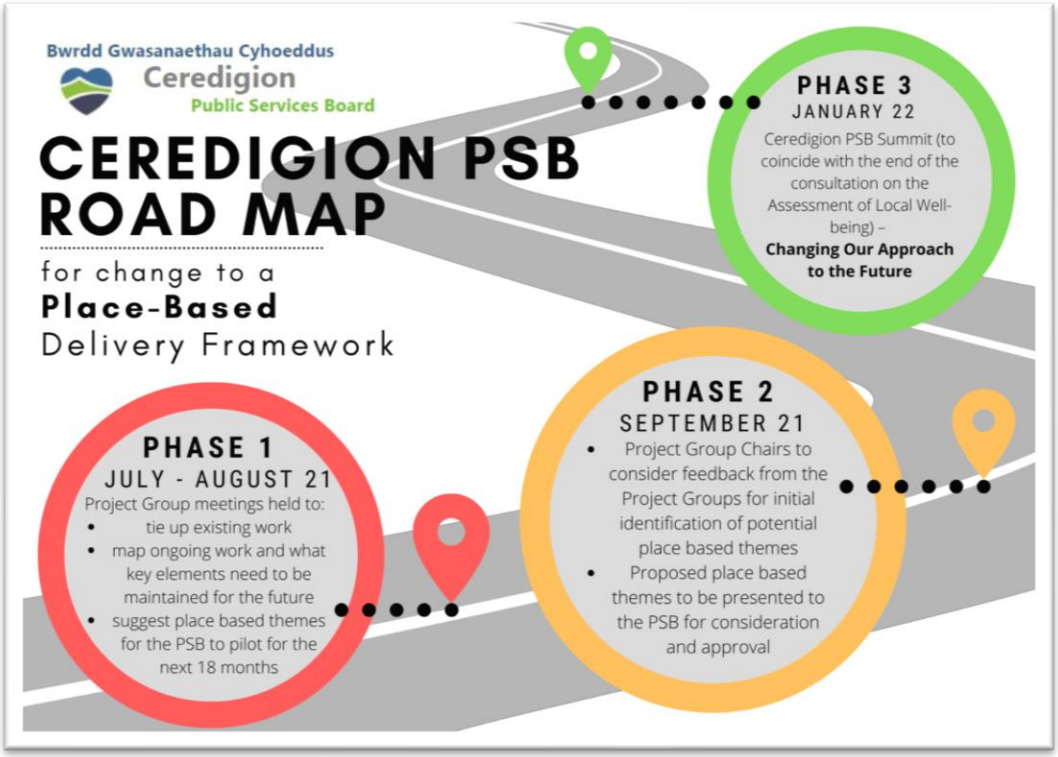
Welcome to the 2021-22 Ceredigion Local Well-being Plan Annual Report. This report highlights the steps taken by the Ceredigion Public Services Board (PSB) to meet the aims set out in our Local Well-being Plan for Ceredigion. It outlines the work that PSB partners have delivered to meet our collective 'well-being duty' to improve the economic, environmental, cultural, and social well-being of people and communities in Ceredigion.

Considering the continued challenges experienced over the last 12 months, and as a direct consequence of Coronavirus, we have continued to strive to apply the 'Covid-lens' to all discussions and actions over the last period. Partnership meetings have continued, and these have proved vital over the last year as partners have collectively agreed a movement to a place-based delivery framework within targeted communities.

Building upon the initial work of the 6 project groups, place-based pilot groups have been established in Aberystwyth, Lampeter and Cardigan and their surrounding areas. Partners have worked tirelessly and have continued to demonstrate their commitment and support to the well-being of residents, businesses, and the communities of Ceredigion as we continue to move into the recovery phase.

With discussions for this move to a place-based delivery framework commencing in July 2021, the transition journey of change commenced. The Ceredigion PSB Road Map for change was agreed by all partners and a copy can be seen below.

Ceredigion PSB Road Map for Change to a Place-based Delivery Framework



Over the last year, the PSB has guided this transition and Phase 1 & 2 of the process has been completed.

Phase 1 was undertaken during July/August 2021 when all project group meetings were held to wrap up existing work, map ongoing work and suggest place-based themes for the PSB to pilot over the remaining period of the Well-being Plan.

Phase 2 commenced in September 2021 which led to the agreement of PSB partners to the three placed based pilot projects namely:

- Community Health & Social Solutions for tackling Poverty and promoting well-being – Cardigan.
- Lampeter Well-being
- Carbon Neutral Aberystwyth and Decarbonisation Strategy

Priorities over the last 12 months have rightly focused on where our collective influence adds value beyond what we already do as individual organisations. These pilot projects will underpin the work of the PSB for the remaining months of the exiting Local Well-being Plan which is in place until end of March 2023.

The new way of remote working, initially forced upon us by the pandemic has continued and collaboration and the co-production of solutions has also continued. This year has

also seen all PSB partners engaging positively with the commencement of the Assessment of Local Wellbeing which will underpin the new Local Wellbeing Plan for the period 2023-28.

PSB partners have approved the Assessment of Local Well-being and fully endorsed the approach to working in partnership with regional colleagues, based on a collective approach for undertaking the assessments of Local Wellbeing across the three PSB areas of Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, and Pembrokeshire.

Interactive workshops were held with Ceredigion PSB Project Groups during the Summer 2021 and data analysis also commenced during this period. In September 2021, an analysis of the findings from the engagement was undertaken and the PSB received the first draft of the Assessment of Local Well-being in November 2021.

In December 2021, the PSB released the draft Assessment of Local Well-being for consultation, which ended in January 2022 and the final assessment of wellbeing has now been agreed for publication.

This Assessment of Local Wellbeing will underpin all discussions at the PSB, and work has already led to the formulation of draft objectives which have been agreed by the PSB at its meeting on the 7th of March, 2022 and will provide the framework for the new plan, for the future.

Full alignment has been targeted between the current work of the PSB and the emerging draft objectives for the new Local Well-being plan for 2023-28 with place-based pilot project partners informing the assessment and engaging with the consultation process. Partners are encouraged to consult internally and utilise their external links to widen the consultation through the effective use of their networks.

We wish to acknowledge the commitment and support that all partners have demonstrated and thank them for their continued recognition of the importance of working collectively for the mutual benefit of enhancing the well-being of communities in Ceredigion.

Chair of Ceredigion Public Services Board

1.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives a legally binding common purpose of seven Well-being Goals and five Ways of Working designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Five Ways of Working

Long term

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.

Prevention

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.

Integration

Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.

Collaboration

Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.

Involvement

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

Seven National Well-being Goals

1.3 COVID-19 Statement

As a direct consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic the implementation of the Project Group actions were reviewed and 2021/22 saw the PSB partners embark on a new way of working through a place-based approach. With the adoption of a framework emphasising a local assessment pilot projects have been able to focus their actions for the direct benefit of selected communities. This transition has been guided by the overall wellbeing 5 ways of working and the 7 national well-being goals values, and these have been driven forward by co-produced action plans aimed at undertaking deep-dives into the needs of communities. Pilot Groups have continued to collaborate on-line via remote meeting solutions and all partners have focused their actions within the continued operating environment enforced by the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic. These continued challenges have led to the design of a partnership framework which has sought to enhance community and individual resilience at all junctures whilst also of course fully recognising the changing operating environment for partners and residents. Action plans have sought to identify and recognise the increasing social and economic challenges facing communities and to address these in a cohesive manor. Work has also sought to embrace all opportunities identified to assist with service provision and inform long term planning at an early stage. This has all been undertaken within the context of enhancing wellbeing and addressing hardship, inequality, and climate change.

During 2021/22 all partners have continued to face service challenges, where-by members of staff from across partner organisations remain re-deployed. The operating context is slowly changing with key adaptations becoming the priority as the requirement for emergency mitigating actions diminish. This is a process of learning and PSB partners have recognised the need to strike an operational balance between current response and future plans.

The place-based approach has fully embraced this opportunity and work commenced during 2021/22 is shaping the plans for the future, drawing on a wide range of experience and actions which have been directly influenced by the effects and impacts imposed on communities by the pandemic.

Residents and communities are facing new and increasing challenges which are now providing the operating framework and priorities for the place-based pilot projects.

SECTION 2 - Context

2.1 Delivering the Local Well-being Plan

The Local Well-being plan, agreed by Ceredigion Services Board on the 16th of April 2018 is now delivered through Place-based Pilot Groups, comprising of relevant officers from across the PSB partners. These Place-based Pilot Groups draw upon the skills and expertise of individuals with relevant specialist knowledge and strive to represent the diversity of our communities across Ceredigion.

These place-based pilot projects are cross-cutting and aim to address local requirements in a holistic manner under the guidance of the well-being aims:

Enable communities to become prosperous, sustainable, and connected by supporting the transformation of economic prospects.

Improve physical and digital infrastructure to support economic development, including suitable and affordable homes.

Create conditions for communities to support individuals from all backgrounds to live fulfilling, independent lives.

Develop and sustain social networks, and cultural and linguistic opportunities in order to enhance well-being and maintain independence.

Create environmentally responsible and safe communities that can adapt and respond to the effects of climate change.

Support communities to enhance their relationship with the natural environment and prepare for extreme weather events.

Enable every child to have the best start in life

Support parental preparedness through early intervention, overcome inequalities and promote holistic learning.

Enable people to create and grasp opportunities and meet challenges throughout their lives.

Improve vocational and life skills, build confidence and enable people to respond positively to change.

Enable people to live active, happy, and healthy lives.

Support physical and mental health and improve well-being through promoting healthy behaviours.

SECTION 3 - Delivery

3.1 Place Based Delivery Framework

At the PSB meeting in July 2021, on behalf of their respective Project Groups, Project Group Chairs raised the matter of the Project Group plans moving forward and their opportunity to reflect a shift in focus and directly inform the new Well-being Plan for 2023-28. It was suggested that the focus now needed to be on how the remaining period within the current plan can be utilised as a transition phase to maximise the impact and contribution of all PSB partners. It was noted that due to COVID–19, capacity has been a great issue within the Project Groups and all future work needs to fully reflect the importance of partnership as a key element of recovery. It was suggested that a place-based delivery framework could benefit future actions. The views of the current Project Groups were sought during the period of July/August 2021 and the Project Group Chairs re-convened on the 6th of September. At the next PSB meeting held on the 17th of September 2021, members agreed to the establishment of three specific place-based pilot projects which were fully informed by the parallel discussions being undertaken by PSB members on the community areas to be used for the Assessment of Local Well-being.

At the PSB meeting in July 2021, members considered a detailed report entitled "Identifying Community Areas in Ceredigion and here the nine Middle Super Output Areas (MSOA's) were agreed as the lower-level areas that reflect the economic, social and cultural differences across the county, along with providing comparable statistical information to a lower geographic area.

Within the context of the above the new three place-based pilot projects have been established for the market towns of Cardigan, Lampeter and Aberystwyth and pilot groups have been established in each of the areas. Considerations for Lampeter and Cardigan are fully reflective and whilst this was also a key consideration for Aberystwyth, it must also be acknowledged that previous work undertaken to consider the establishment of a heat network within the town has provided an opportunity for detailed consideration.

Chairs have been appointed for each pilot by the PSB and these are namely Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations for the Cardigan place-based pilot, Ceredigion County Council for the Lampeter place-based pilot and Aberystwyth University for the Aberystwyth place-based pilot.

To facilitate the transition of the delivery model from the 6 existing project groups to the 3 place-based pilot projects, the first meetings of these new place-based pilot projects were held during the third quarter of the financial year for 2021-22. Discussions centred upon the work undertaken previously, understanding of the place-based approach and

an agreement of the aspirations for the future. Within the context of these discussions, new action plans have begun to emerge for each area. Working alongside the Assessment of Local Well-being these priorities are also now proactively informing the creation of the new Well-being plan for 2023-28. The impact of this process is vital both in terms of content and the strength of partnership activity. In addition to the appointment of Chairs for each place-based group, a decision has also been made by the PSB to appoint a democratically elected place-based pilot Champion who assumes responsibility for the direct contribution of local knowledge and insight into discussions. Along with the establishment of the place-based project groups, based on the inclusion of partners with local responsibility for service provision, the steering committees stand in a strong position to reflect local needs and offer local solutions to residents and communities.

The first place-based pilot project as established in Cardigan and following initial deliberations by the Steering Committee and the commencement of an initial baseline assessment of the Cardigan area its members agreed that its working title should accurately reflect its objective to tackle hardship in the market town. The baseline report produced by Ceredigion County Council's Performance and Research Team, on behalf of the PSB identified the key challenges facing the locality in terms of employment, income, housing and community safety and this has led to the agreement of its title, "Improving Community Well-being and Tackling Hardship in Cardigan". Further details of the work of this place-based pilot can be found in **Section 3.2.**

The second place-based pilot project group has been established in Lampeter which had its initial focus based upon the establishment of the Wellbeing Centre within the market town. Previous work had been undertaken to identify the physical space required for the centre, to commission architects and to outline the suite of support services which could be collectively delivered from the location on behalf of the community. Following partnership discussions, the pilot was ready for the appointment of contractors and work would focus on the benefits that the re-purposing of the space could bring. Wider benefits and links would also be considered by harnessing the positive characteristics and strengths of the Lampeter area. Further details of the work of this place-based pilot can be found in **Section 3.3**.

These two place-based pilot groups will take a holistic approach to the community and will seek to address the range of well-being aims.

The third place-based pilot group takes a slightly different approach as in addition to its geographic considerations within Aberystwyth town it has a well-defined sector of interest within the far-reaching and specialised field of climate change. This place-based pilot is now in existence in Aberystwyth and is focused on the environmental considerations of aiming to achieve a carbon neutral Aberystwyth and a

decarbonisation strategy for the area. Building upon previous work undertaken to address the well-being objective of creating environmentally responsive and safe communities that can adapt and respond to the effects of climate change, this place-based pilot has sought to consider the climate change agenda whilst focusing on the challenges and opportunities presented to a geographic area. This work has also been influenced by ongoing feasibility work to establish a district heat network in the town. For this work, the specialist support of PSB partners has been called upon and it has been agreed that it will build upon the aspirations and strategic commitments of individual partners to target net zero carbon status. Further details of the work of this pilot can be found in **Section 3.4**.

All three place-based pilot groups will build upon the wealth of knowledge and understanding of all PSB partners, will take into consideration the outcomes of previous research work and will reflect upon the current position of the County as it embarks on its Covid-19 recovery. The work will also be fully aligned to the recent Assessment of Local Well-being.

To date the work undertaken has drawn upon the extensive range of expertise provided by the PSB from the four statutory partners namely:

- Ceredigion County Council
- Natural Resources Wales
- Hywel Dda University Health Board
- Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service

The PSB also embraces the wider involvement of additional partners with active participation on behalf of the public, private and voluntary sectors namely:

- Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations
- Dyfed Powys Police & Crime Commissioner
- University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- National Library of Wales
- Welsh Government
- Wales Community Rehabilitation Company
- Probation Service
- One Voice Wales
- Dyfed Powys Police
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Aberystwyth University
- Public Health Wales
- Coleg Ceredigion

Having assessed the work undertaken to date, the effects of the pandemic and the emerging themes from the new Assessment for Local Well-being the new place-based groups from December 2021 have now set priorities for the three place-based geographic communities of interest in Cardigan, Lampeter and Aberystwyth. Each has

priorities which are reflective of the area and their work will continue to inform and further enhance the evidence base required to produce the new Local Well-being plan for the period 2023-28.

3.2. Improving well-being and tackling hardship in Cardigan

Context

Feedback from the Project Groups identified an opportunity to develop a place-based pilot which would focus on understanding the challenges facing two of the most deprived wards in the County, in Cardigan. This pilot would also seek to identify opportunities for these local communities in terms of service provision and would assess the potential for the replication of solutions across other communities in the County. A deep-dive assessment via the adoption of an ABCD (Assets Based Community Development) assessment of needs, would be undertaken and specific consideration would be given to the inter-relationship which exists between poverty, health, and social considerations. This place-based pilot would combine with, complement, and build upon work which has been commenced by PSB partners and would complement future work as strategic fit Is sought with local, regional and national strategies and programmes.

The considerations of this place-based pilot group are firmly focused on improving community well-being and tackling hardship in Cardigan and partners are continuing to work closely to identify a range of integrated actions to improve the opportunities available to all residents.

Key actions undertaken in 2021/22

Initial work undertaken in Cardigan has focused on the following key steps: -

- Mapping
- Investing
- Targeting

The mapping of assets and resources has served to provide a snapshot of what is available in and around the town and this work has been underpinned by a benchmarking assessment entitled "Improving Community Well-being and tackling hardship in Cardigan." This work is complementary to previous work which has formed part of a County wide strategy to develop 6 place plans, one for each market town. Initial work, with the gathering of background evidence, has been undertaken in Cardigan and this has led to the production of the draft, Town Council led document. The additional mapping and assessment has now been undertaken to further support the Cardigan place plan and this provides an overview of the current key economic and social indicators facing the market town with a view to informing the priorities for the group for the future.

Key hardship challenges have been identified within the community with Cardigan being characterised by severe deprivation in terms of income, employment and community safety. The data has clearly shown that hardship manifests itself in several

ways within the community and a need has been identified for a range of interventions and services to tackle these challenges. Gaps have been identified in terms of the provision of services and the impact of these gaps on the future have been considered by the group. Steps have been taken to address concerns and partners are now collaborating with a view to enhancing current services, sharing knowledge, influencing future programmes of work and funding streams and targeting provision within the market town.

Task groups have been established to support the work and priorities have been set for mapping the direct role of partners within the town, the sharing of funding information, the pooling of resources and the prioritisation of local action. Networks have been identified with a view to influencing the delivery of local support and partners have agreed to work in collaboration on a range of actions with the aim of reflecting the key characteristics of a circular economy.

An assessment of the current strategies, which provide the context of development work in Cardigan has identified the need for the community to receive early intervention with the emphasis clearly focused on preventative action.

Working in partnership with strong participation from the 3rd sector during 2021-22 the emphasis of the group has been firmly placed on the importance of community engagement, the co-production of solutions and the increasingly vital importance of harnessing the strength of volunteer capacity to build sustained resilience across and between partners. Work over the coming period will focus on schemes identified by the community and PSB partners, including the identification of specific project ideas which will be aimed at linking geographic locations within the market town, the creation of enhanced outdoor facilities, enhancing the use of green space for recreation purposes, improved accessible river walks and the consideration of an art-based community hub. Activity will continue to harness the individual and collective strengths of partners and strive to co-produce and deliver specific actions which will recognise the strengths of the local community and will seek to tackle the hardship faced by residents. Further collective learning, knowledge transfer, participatory budgeting and joint delivery of services will underpin the forward work programme for this place-based pilot with the objective of creating a shared vision for the town and outlining the distinct benefits of a place-based approach to tackling hardship.

3.3 Wellbeing in Lampeter

Context

Work undertaken on the establishment of a Well-being Centre at Lampeter has reached an advanced stage and it is now timely to involve partners and the wider community further in the project. This place-based pilot would provide the platform to inform plans and embrace partner input to add value and avoid duplication of service provision. Partners have previously agreed that local enhancements can be made by effectively sharing assets and resources and by harnessing the opportunity to co-produce community services. Understanding the landscape of local services, identifying assets and resources and reaching agreement on the priorities for sector development is key alongside the recording of the achieved outputs of this work which can inform future well-being developments across the County.

In addition to the direct outputs of this place-based pilot and through the work of the PSB and its partners, opportunities also exist to link this place-based pilot with other local developments such as the Lampeter Resilience Hub, Tir Glas and the priorities identified by the asset-based assessment undertaken in the Lampeter Place Plan.

Key actions undertaken in 2021/22

From its initial meeting this Steering Group recognised its role and responsibility for integrating activities within the local community with a particular focus on the health and well-being of citizens in Lampeter and neighbouring areas. Through the establishment of a strong network, discussions have led the group to consider what can be done collectively to make a specific difference to well-being in Lampeter and the surrounding areas.

These discussions have centred around Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Food, Physical and Environmental Wellbeing and Anti-social Behaviour. These themes have been identified as being key to the future development of the market town whilst also building upon the work which is already being undertaken by individual partners. It has been clearly noted that this pilot must focus upon collective actions and strive to create co-produced solutions for the benefit of the residents of Lampeter and the surrounding areas. Initial actions have sought to ensure the inclusion of a wide range of partners, reflecting activities which are already being implemented in and around the market town and the local villages and communities. This will ensure that the voices of different elements of the community are heard and that future priorities complement existing work.

Initial assessment has led to the formulation of an action plan focussing on researching local communications, linking with Lampeter Place Plan, assessing the recommendations of the Re-connecting Nature feasibility report for project proposals in and around Lampeter and supporting people of all ages in the area to reconnect with nature and the natural environment by enabling access to more green open spaces.

All partners will continue to review their priorities and consider "What's going well?", "What are we worried about?" and "What three things do we need to do to make a difference?". The outcome of this assessment will directly influence the ongoing development of the action plan over the next period as it strives to inform the new Well-being plan for 2023-28.

3.4 Carbon Neutral Aberystwyth and Decarbonisation Strategy

Context

Important developmental work has already commenced by Aberystwyth University to consider a collection of actions in Aberystwyth with the vital objective of decreasing carbon. The work has reached a stage whereby the support of partners is essential and the direct support and involvement of the PSB is of paramount importance to enable the project to progress. With various net zero carbon by 2030 action plans currently being introduced the opportunity has been identified for partners to collectively support a place-based pilot in Aberystwyth. Work undertaken to date has widely recognised and understood that to address this challenging target a suite of actions is required to collectively contribute towards its achievement. It has also been identified that this pilot could benefit from a co-produced strategy by the PSB which would align priorities for the implementation of these actions.

Key actions undertaken in 2021/22

The key objective of this Pilot Group remains to support communities and enhance their relationship with the natural environment. This aim was identified as a priority by the PSB as it is widely understood that climate change is an acknowledged threat to our long-term future, likewise the impact of modern life on our natural assets. With a place-based approach focussing on Aberystwyth and taking into consideration, amongst others the Welsh Government Energy Efficiency Strategy, the Mid-Wales Energy Plans, and the emerging guidance to produce Local Energy Plans.

For 2021/22 this group initially set out their co-produced actions for this Pilot Group as follows:

- To undertake an updated Feasibility Study for the District Heat Network project based at the University Campus, Penglais, Aberystwyth.
- To share Net Zero aspirations, exchange examples of good practice and actively support individual and collective actions for the promotion of a carbon neutral town.
- To collaborate on a plan comprising of a mix of mitigations and adaptations required to achieving carbon neutral.
- To understand the national, regional and local context for wide-ranging energy plans.

With the initial emphasis for this group being predominantly based upon the district heat network pilot project at Penglais the partnership membership for this group reflected the requirement for partners to confirm their commitment and support. This was not an entirely new project as previous work had been undertaken some years ago to commence consideration of its development. An initial feasibility study has been completed however with the support of PSB members it has now been agreed that the time is opportune for further work to be undertaken on the project to progress the opportunities presented by its implementation. Consideration has been given to the role and responsibility of partners within this work and it was identified that to proceed an updated feasibility study was required. Financial calculations needed to be updated and resources were required to enable this work to proceed. In order to secure this funding package key partners namely, Aberystwyth University, Ceredigion County Council and Hywel Dda University Health Board agreed to proceed and seek formal commitment within their respective organisations. This would have led to a tri-partite commitment to the feasibility study, thus enabling the renewed feasibility study to be progressed. However, resulting from further consultation with BEIS (Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) the funding for the feasibility was secured.

The outcome of the feasibility study will further guide this pilot project and progress is now monitored by a small task group.

The additional priorities identified by this newly established place-based pilot group has now led to the extension of the group membership and discussions have centred around the exchange of ideas, the sharing of aspirations and the identification of mitigations and adaptations which have the objective of achieving carbon neutral targets. The work is guided by the strategic framework provided by national and regional policies and programmes and partners are now progressing to consider a co-produced local strategy. Mapping of existing commitments, current activities and the sharing of experience of work undertaken to date is being prioritised by partners and they are increasingly interacting with consultations at national, regional and local levels.

An example of involvement with national consultation can be drawn from links to the national conversation which has been commenced by NRW (Natural Resources Wales) on the future of the Welsh natural environment. PSB partners have engaged with this national conversation and have sought to fully align future thinking. Encouraging discussion, through a series of scenarios based around the key question of "What do we want for our natural environment?" has provided this group with the opportunity to consider these issues within a place-based context. Discussions have extended to recognise the requirement for a range of collective actions with a view to improving future outcomes.

Work has also been undertaken to link with WG Energy Planning and their vision for a future energy system which is firmly based on three pillars namely, electricity, heat and transport. Indeed, the scope of an energy plan revolves around low carbon transport, decarbonisation of heat and power decarbonisation and smart supply and the partnership discussions for this place-based pilot will reflect this. The place-based pilot complements the Local Area Energy Planning (LEAP) which helps to understand what needs to happen, where and by when and fully recognises that all places are different- the people, housing stock, geography and ambitions.

With these differences identified at a local level the work of this place-based pilot is also of course reflected in the links, via individual partners, to the work of Growing Mid-Wales and its Mid Wales Energy Strategy. This work has clearly outlined the energy planning process with actions detailed for a baseline, vision and priorities, pathway modelling, economic impact and sharing and socialising and this led to the identification of significant potential benefits across the region. These benefits can include integration of actions, democratic involvement and accountability, evidence-based action, innovation, investment and empowerment. This is of course on a regional basis and a vision has been outlined for 2035 "To achieve a zero-carbon energy system that delivers social and economic benefits, eliminates fuel poverty, better connects Mid Wales to the rest of the UK, and contributes to wider UK decarbonisation."

Local understanding continues within the place-based pilot at Aberystwyth as it also embraces the local context and the next steps for the Aberystwyth place plan. Previous PSB led research has fed into ideas outlined in the Aberystwyth place plan, which is a Town Council led document that seeks to provide details of future aspirations for the development of the town. Initial aspirations are now leading to the development of firm project proposals which will be categorised in accordance with their preparedness for implementation.

3.5 Pilot Project Summary

The hosting of partnership meetings through virtual means has resulted in increased representation and participation from most partners. Each Pilot Group has now co-produced new Action Plans which have been firmly considered through the COVID lens. Partners have demonstrated further commitment to individual tasks through a continued direct implementation role via Task and Finish Groups.

Pilot Groups meet on a quarterly basis and are fully accountable to the PSB. At all Pilot Groups meeting members are encouraged to highlight individual items for strategic consideration by the PSB and these are reported on their behalf by the individual Pilot Group Chairs. Working within the strategic context provided by the PSB

recommendations for action are presented to the PSB who provide the guidance and support for action. The far-reaching networks provided via partners are utilised to share information and knowledge in a cascading effect and opportunities are capitalised upon through collaboration and shared vision.

Proposed Action for the Future

During the next period, partners will continue with their work on the priorities set within the three place-based pilot projects as agreed by the PSB. They will place this work within the context of the Assessment of Local Well-being which has been undertaken this year and will continue to proactively support the well-being objectives agreed by the PSB for the new Local Well-being plan for the period 2023-28. The draft objectives were endorsed by the PSB on the 7th of March 2022 and are namely:

- We will work together to achieve a sustainable economy that benefits local people and builds on the strengths of Ceredigion.
- We will work together to reduce inequalities in our communities and use social and green solutions to improve physical and mental health.
- We will work together to deliver decarbonisation initiatives within Ceredigion to protect and enhance our natural resources.
- We will work together to enable communities to feel safe and connected and will promote cultural diversity and increase opportunities to use the Welsh language.

The extensive range of partners involved in the place-based pilot projects will continue to inform the new well-being plan as it emerges and will proactively utilise their networks to encourage participation from residents and businesses in the engagement plan which will now commence to guide the production of the Local Well-being Plan for 2023-28.

SECTION 4 – Connections

Ceredigion Public Services Board Sub-Groups

In addition to the 6 Project Groups there are Sub-groups that report to the Ceredigion PSB. Detailed below is a summary of the work of the Poverty Sub-Group, the Refugee Resettlement Sub-group, and the Bilingual Futures Forum.

4.1 Ceredigion PSB Poverty Sub-group: Tackling Hardship Strategy – Update for 2021-22

The Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22 was published in August 2020 as a successor to the Ceredigion Combatting Poverty Strategy 2016-20. It has been agreed that the Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22 should be extended for another year, to 2023.

The Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22 has three key objectives as noted below and the Action Plan has 65 actions which are delivered by a range of PSB partners:

Three key objectives of Ceredigion Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22
To develop a **shared understanding** with partner agencies of the evolving impact of COVID-19 on hardship in Ceredigion through the collation and analysis of data.
To co-ordinate and **consolidate collaborative efforts** with partner agencies in order to promote and take advantage of all available help and assistance.
To **identify gaps** in support and evolving hardship needs in order to develop early effective intervention that will strengthen individual and community resilience as we adjust to the impact of COVID-19.

The Action Plan is divided into 3 separate pillars for implementation, and these are namely:

Three pillars of the Tackling Hardship Strategy action plan
Pillar 1 – help for those who are experiencing financial hardship
Pillar 2 – help for those experiencing exhaustion, stress and anxiety
Pillar 3 – making sure that people can access services

Data dashboards, developed by Ceredigion County Council are used to monitor levels of poverty in Ceredigion. The data dashboards monitor high level population indicators.

These show a sustained decrease in the number of claimants, including young people who are claiming benefits for reason of unemployment.

Main concerns out of the 2021 Progress Report were low incomes, debt, recruitment difficulties, particularly in the childcare sector and public transport, and an increase in mental health and well-being issues. Property prices are continuing to increase across Ceredigion. Fuel prices have risen, and consideration needs to be given to the developing situation, particularly considering the outbreak of war in Ukraine.

4.2 PSB Refugees Resettlement Sub-Group

Ceredigion's commitment to resettle 50 refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict was met in February 2021. Individuals who worked alongside the British Army in Afghanistan were deemed at risk due to the developing situation there. As such, Ceredigion County Council committed to resettle two families from Afghanistan. One family from Afghanistan arrived in December and we are expecting another to arrive at the beginning of April 2022.

In light of the outbreak of the War in Ukraine, Ceredigion County Council have agreed to house refugees in the county. At the time of writing no refugees have arrived in the county, either through the Homes for Ukraine or through the Wales Super Sponsorship Scheme. It is expected that we will see Ukrainian refugees housed across the county. The British Red Cross will support the resettlement of these refugees. Ceredigion County Council is working with the Welsh Government on the provision of Welcome Centres across Wales.

4.3 Ceredigion Welsh Language Strategy 2018-23: Bilingual Futures Forum

In accordance with the Promotion Standards, the Council is required to draw up a 5-year strategy explaining how the Council will set about promoting the Welsh language and facilitating wider use of the language within the area.

Ceredigion's second Welsh Language Strategy was published in 2018, in order to promote the use of the Welsh language. The strategy explains how the Council along with other partner organisations (members of Ceredigion's Bilingual Futures Forum) will set about promoting the Welsh language and facilitating wider use of the language. In accordance with the requirement, a target was set for increasing the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion by the end of the strategy period, namely the percentage of Welsh language speakers in Ceredigion rising to at least 48.5% (an increase of approximately 1,500 Welsh speakers).

For this strategy, Ceredigion's Bilingual Futures Forum agreed to focus on 3 strategic aims, namely:

Strategic Aim 1: To maintain and increase the Welsh-language skills of the people of Ceredigion

Strategic Aim 2: To maintain and increase opportunities to use the Welsh language in Ceredigion

Strategic Aim 3: To create social conditions that enable the Welsh Language to thrive in Ceredigion.

A copy of the Action Plan can be found here:
http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/welsh-language/promoting-and-facilitating-the-language/

The Bilingual Futures Forum works to ensure fulfilment of the Language Strategy, and members include Council Officers, along with Officers from partner organisations who are committed to working together for the benefit of the Welsh language across the county.
Due to the COVID-19 situation, the Council is concerned that the pandemic has delayed our plans and has hindered us from reaching our target of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and users of the language in Ceredigion, by the end of the current Strategy's lifespan. We organised a workshop in March, to review our progress in relation to the current Language Strategy, considering what else needs to be done in preparation for the ensuing Strategy. We asked everyone to provide oral evidence and we have also asked all members to provide written contributions before the end of April. These are the questions posed in order to stimulate discussion:

- Do you believe that there is an increase in the number of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion today?
  Yes /No / remains stable
- What works well?
- What are your concerns?
- What needs to happen?

We will be using the responses as part of our process of conducting a full review of the current Language Strategy's achievements. We will then set about developing a Language Strategy for the next five years.

4.4 Other Presentations and Considerations 2021/22

In addition to the projects, initiatives and strategies noted within this report Ceredigion PSB members have also considered and discussed the following during 2021/22:

- Community Wealth Building Partner Programme – Final Report January 2022
- Voluntary Services Emergency and Recovery Fund - WCVA (Wales Council for Voluntary Action)
- Re-connecting Nature – Resources for Change Ltd.
- All Wales Review of Assaults on Emergency Workers – Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG)
- Nature and Us – What Future do we want for our Natural Environment? – NRW (Natural Resources Wales)